

Many dollars meant for the war in Afghanistan ended up in bank accounts in Switzerland and Dubai.

To where will we trace the bounty of the Ukrainian grift?

This war could end tomorrow if we pursue negotiation, but Biden refuses. Not only do we arm the Ukrainian military, we pay their politicians' salaries. The \$113 billion in aid included funding of the Ukrainian Government.

We can and must push for peace. You don't really hear that from many people these days with the exception of President Trump. Trump is right to recognize that we are on the brink of world war III and that immediate action for peace is necessary to stop disaster.

Unfortunately, there is a bipartisan coalition working to continue the war. When Elon Musk proposed a peace plan, Nikki Haley attacked him saying that we "shouldn't push our weight on them."

This is, of course, nonsense. We have pushed billions of dollars on them. We can simultaneously pressure North Korea and China from supplying Russia, and we ought to do so.

WALL STREET-BEIJING AXIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, the Chinese Communist Party obviously believes that they can invade America's airspace deliberately, notoriously, and without serious consequences. They even believe—and this shows their hubris and their gall—that they can announce that they reserve the right to retaliate against America for shooting down their spy balloon.

Do you know what, Madam Speaker?

After 26 years in this House, I would say that the Chinese Communist Party is probably right. They did it. They hit us, and they can probably get away with it because the two parties will compete about who can scream the greatest invective toward Beijing, and then the two parties will attack each other saying: Well, what did President Trump do? And what did President Biden do?

In the end, we will have nothing but bruised, partisan vocal cords.

I have seen for 26 years the Beijing-Wall Street axis control our policy toward China.

Now this is just a balloon, but it is on top of two enormous problems with China. One is the lopsided trade relationship where they prohibit us from exporting to them and impose higher tariffs on us than we impose on them.

The second was the obfuscation and lack of cooperation of China when COVID arose on their territory.

But we probably will not have meaningful retaliation for those great harms and the most recent one because Wall Street has been in control of this House since the day in the year 2000

when we granted most-favored-nation status to Beijing and let them into the World Trade Organization. Before that, China was an annoyance and a slumbering giant. Since then, the Chinese Communist Party has done untold damage to our people, to their people, and, of course, to our economy and national security.

There are two things Wall Street will not let us do and two things China would actually try to avoid, and that is dealing with Taiwan and trade.

So I have three proposals. I will look forward to working with anyone on either side of the aisle to turn this into good legislation.

First, Congress should provide that we automatically allow Taiwan to buy certain defense items and that we act expeditiously at the congressional level without waiting for the administration to allow the Seahawk helicopters and other necessary defense items to go to Taiwan.

Second—and this arises from my years as chairman of the Investor Protection, Entrepreneurship, and Capital Markets Subcommittee—we need to require all major corporations to disclose, as a risk factor to their investors, how they would be affected by an end of the U.S.-China economic relationship or major impediment to it.

Investors deserve the information, and we need corporations to compete for capital by showing that they have made themselves more resilient. If our companies are more resilient, then our economy is more resilient.

Third, we need to provide that we immediately end most-favored-nation status to China if they blockade or invade Taiwan. This has to be immediate, certain, and known in Beijing before they launch their invasion, and it is not immediate and it is certain unless we provide no executive branch waiver.

Finally, a fourth proposal, and that is we need to provide an immediate 20 percent tariff on all Chinese goods if they retaliate against us for implementing any of those first three proposals. If they retaliate against that retaliation, then we have to be ready to go beyond that.

We can act. We can act with regard to Taiwan, we can act with regard to trade, and we can act with regard to a country that has built the most lopsided trading relationship in the history of international trade and whose actions have turned the industrial Midwest into what we now refer to as the Rust Belt which has led to a decline in real wages for those without a college education for over 25 years leading to fentanyl and a host of other problems.

So we can act.

The question is: Can we overcome the Wall Street-Beijing axis?

Can we deal with the partisanship here, or will this balloon just go over our heads and lead, once again, to partisan vituperation?

HONORING MICHAEL WEINSTOCK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. SANTOS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SANTOS. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to honor a former volunteer firefighter who was at Ground Zero on 9/11, Michael Weinstock. He was an assistant district attorney in Brooklyn's special victim's bureau and a volunteer firefighter and EMT.

On the morning of 9/11, Michael witnessed the black smoke billowing out of the World Trade Center. Without thought, he voluntarily rode with first responders to help in any way he could. Michael had been unloading medical equipment out of an ambulance when the South Tower crumbled and nearly crushed Michael to death.

Today, Michael suffers from a painful and incurable disease: neuropathy.

Michael has been a strong advocate for neuropathy to be covered by the World Trade Center Health Program. Neuropathy is a medical condition that results in damage to the nerves outside the brain and spinal cord. Those who suffer from neuropathy experience weakness and numbness which typically occurs in the hands or feet. This can be incredibly painful and debilitating, and many are unable to live normal lives. This is also known as the suicide disease due to limited effective treatments and the fact that there is no cure.

Studies from the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health have linked neuropathy with the 9/11 dust. The data from the 2019 study found that nearly 10,000 firefighters and emergency medical workers were exposed to toxins at the World Trade Center.

The World Trade Center Health Program covered conditions categories include: acute and traumatic injuries, airway and digestive disorders, cancers, and mental health conditions, to name a few.

In 2016, the World Trade Center Health Program was petitioned to add peripheral neuropathy to its list of covered conditions, which it declined to do. In 2017, an FDNY responder again petitioned the program to add peripheral neuropathy to its covered conditions list. Unfortunately, the World Trade Center Health Program declined to update its list a second time citing insufficient evidence.

Michael's story is one of many that have yet to be told to a wider audience. This issue goes beyond the political pale of Republican versus Democrat. As a Member of the 118th Congress, I will use this opportunity to raise awareness of what the men and women who suffer from this debilitating disease are going through due to the exposure of the toxins from the World Trade Center.

Since the World Trade Center Health Program does not cover neuropathy, people like Michael must pay out of pocket for treatment, medication, and other medical needs.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues that we work together and find a solution to have conditions such as neuropathy be covered under the World Trade Center Health Program.

Tomorrow, I will be proud to have Michael as my guest for the State of the Union Address. I am proud to be his Member, as he is a constituent of the Third Congressional District.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 24 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. NUNN of Iowa) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

God, You are our refuge and our strength, a very present help in times of trouble. We offer our prayers today asking that You provide the people of Turkey and Syria, who are in the throes of the unfathomable devastation of today's earthquake, refuge from this disaster and strength to endure its indiscriminate destruction.

Be their rock even as the Earth still crumbles beneath them. Shelter them under Your wings until this disaster passes. Erase the divide of politics and past hatred by the rescue efforts and humanitarian aid of their neighboring countries, and then from the rubble may there emerge the shared responsibility we each have as humans one for another in times of suffering.

Embrace in Your arms all who have lost loved ones this day and uphold those who are still awaiting news of those not yet rescued.

In the midst of this tragedy, grant each of them the certainty of Your abiding spirit. May their fears be relieved though the Earth should change, their uncertainties assuaged though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea. For You, O Lord, are their refuge and their strength, a very present help in these times of trouble.

In the hope to be found in You and in the promise of Your name, we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

CCP BALLOON INVASION

(Mr. ALFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the most critical national security threat our Nation is facing today: the Chinese Communist Party and their invasion of our U.S. airspace.

The recent Chinese surveillance balloon was allowed to fly unchecked from one end of our country to the other, reaffirming that the CCP is the top threat to our national security. I am beyond outraged at the fact that this administration has allowed this to happen.

Was he asleep behind the wheel of his Corvette?

Unfortunately, that does seem to be the case because this did not just occur for hours, it went on for days.

At the hands of this administration, the CCP was allowed to invade our airspace, and it happened right over our district, right over Whiteman Air Force Base, the home of the B-2 stealth bomber.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I will not back down until we get answers.

We cannot allow China to walk all over us and outpace us militarily. This administration continues to project weakness on the world stage, and it must end. We need answers. We must have a plan to stop the Chinese Communist Party's clear and blatant military aggression.

HONORING AND COMMENDING THE PINOLE VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL SPARTANS FOOTBALL TEAM

(Mr. GARAMENDI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and commend the Pinole Valley High School Spartans football team upon winning the 2022 Division 7 California State championship. This outstanding achievement marks the first high school State football title secured by the West Contra Costa Unified School District.

This accomplishment would not have been possible without the tireless dedication of Pinole Valley players, coaches, parents, students, and educators. The Spartans' unwavering commitment to their craft and their remarkable teamwork represent the very best of our students, athletes, and schools.

This championship title demonstrates both the talent of the Spartans football team and their discipline. They exemplified the character, steadfastness, and capability that is cultivated at Pinole Valley High School.

On behalf of the constituents of California's Eighth Congressional District, I congratulate the Pinole Valley High School Spartans football team for achieving this championship title and reassert my continued support and pride for all of our student athletes.

PRESIDENT BIDEN SHOULD RESIGN

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the catastrophic Chinese spy balloon spectacle clearly threatened American families from Alaska to Missouri to North Carolina and to my home community in South Carolina with Fort Jackson and the Savannah River Site.

This confirms that President Biden and Vice President HARRIS should resign.

My call for their resignation was valid in August 2021 due to the surrender and the disastrous withdrawal in Afghanistan with 13 dead, creating a safe haven for terrorists to attack American families.

It was not political in 2021 when the succeeding President, then-Speaker NANCY PELOSI, would have been a Democrat.

And it is not political now in 2023 when the succeeding President would be Speaker KEVIN MCCARTHY, who is a Republican.

It is irrelevant for American families which party is in power because the first criterion of a leader should be their capability regardless of party, and sadly, Biden and Harris are failures.

Resignation now is further reinforced by their open border policies having allowed hundreds of identified terrorists